



State of Alaska
Department of Labor & Workforce Development
Division of Business Partnerships
1016 West 6th Avenue, Suite 205
Anchorage, Alaska 99501
907-269-4551 \ 907-269-0068 fax



~~~~~

## Denali Training Fund - Youth Program Quarterly Progress Report

Funds for this project are provided by the Denali Commission and the USDOL and managed, in partnership, by the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

|                       |                                          |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Name of Organization: | Avant-Garde Learning Foundation / 10-316 |
| Name of Project:      | Career Explorations Program              |
| Reporting Period:     | 07/01/2011 - 09/30/2011                  |
| Contact Name:         | Kameron H. Perez-Verdia                  |
| Contact Number:       | 907-279-0356                             |

Certification: I certify that the information in this report is current, correct and true and in accordance with the terms and conditions of the grant agreement.

Signed by: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated 10-5-2011

The performance of this grant will be based upon the success achieved in relation to the goals established and approved by the Alaska Department of Labor, and will be reported in the Grantee's quarterly progress reports. Specific goals and objectives for this project are:

The Career Explorations Program (CEP) will provide pre-employment skills development and career exploration for 100 participants co-facilitated by business, industry, education, and other organizations. Distance learning technology will include an e-learning portal, web conferencing and videoteleconferencing (VTC). Curriculum is aligned with state standards for graduation and will provide information and experience to help students plan and prepare for future employment opportunities.

During the 2010/2011 academic school year, students will take part in Youth Employability, Work Experience, Job Shadowing, Career Projects, and Exposure to Career Opportunities,

Preparation, Resource Development, and Academic Training through the Internet, Videoteleconferencing, and working in the larger community.

The CEP program will be integrated into standard curriculum available to participants as part of their normal classroom activities. The onsite teachers will mentor students and lead those through Career Projects, AKCIS, ALEXsys, resume writing, and interview skills.

CEP will focus on the rural communities of Southeast Island Schools, Oscarville, Kipnuk, Napaskiak, and Atmautluak. We will also offer services to North Slope Borough School District, Kodiak, Nome, the Bering Strait School District, and any other communities that need our services.

High school youth will be selected by the enrolled sites – there are no prerequisites. Students are normally part of a class that is already being offered at the school site. CEP state aligned projects and curriculum is incorporated into the classroom by the teacher as he/she sees fit. Barrier to Employments training is included as part of the regular curriculum content. All actions have consequences and what happens when students do things that are unlawful could have long term effects on their career choices. After every session teachers will send in attendance so we can keep track of participation.

|                                                    |
|----------------------------------------------------|
| <b>TARGET POPULATION:</b> 100 (16 to 24 year olds) |
|----------------------------------------------------|

**Number of participants served to date:** 104

- 36 participants have experienced 15 or more VTC lessons, with all the participating teachers having received more than 20 state standards aligned lesson plans to prepare for and demonstrate knowledge acquired during these VTC sessions.
- 11 of those 36 students have also participated in a Job Shadow experience.
- 54 students have participated in Job Shadow experiences as well as state standards aligned curriculum and resume/interview skill building activities.

|                                               |
|-----------------------------------------------|
| <b>GOALS/OBJECTIVES ACCOMPLISHED TO DATE:</b> |
|-----------------------------------------------|

|                                                                              |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Please provide the number of participants served to date in the table below. |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

**Goal One:**      To provide 100 participants with relevant information about careers from Alaska High Growth Industry Leaders via a virtual learning portal in collaboration with in-class curriculum.

**Objective 1**      Participants will take part in the Grant Recipient's state education aligned curriculum.

- Objective 2** Participants will take part in resume writing and interview skills building activities.
- Objective 3** Participants will complete a job shadow.
- Objective 4** Participants will complete an assessment and evaluation worksheet.
- Objective 5** Participants will be assessed and evaluated by on-site teachers.
- Objective 6** Participants will take part in Barrier to Employment training.

| Goal / Objective |   |                                                                                         | Number to be Served | Number Served to Date | Documentation                                                                                 |
|------------------|---|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1                | 1 | Participants will take part in state education aligned curriculum.                      | 100                 | 90                    | Participant attendance roster.                                                                |
|                  | 2 | Participants will take part in resume writing and interview skills building activities. | 100                 | 90                    | Copies of resumes and interview results should be maintained in the participant files.        |
|                  | 3 | Participants will complete a job shadow event.                                          | 100                 | 65                    | Participant records documenting the job shadow experiences.                                   |
|                  | 4 | Participants will complete assessment and evaluation worksheet.                         | 100                 | 90                    | Copies of assessment and evaluation worksheets should be maintained in the participant files. |
|                  | 5 | On-site teachers will complete assessment and evaluation worksheet.                     | 100                 | 90                    | Copies of assessment and evaluation worksheets should be maintained in the participant files. |
|                  | 6 | Participants will take part in Barrier to Employment training.                          | 100                 | 90                    | Participant attendance roster.                                                                |

#### **NARRATIVE OF SERVICES:**

Provide a brief narrative of services provided this quarter by applicable Goal/Objective.

During the extended quarter the Career Explorations Program created and implemented resume and interview skills building activities for students, brought guest speakers into the classrooms virtually, and created partnerships that provided 54 students with job shadow experiences. The focus of this quarter was to help students experience job shadows. All of the schools we work with are in communities that offer very few local job shadow opportunities, thus making it difficult to meet the needs of the students. Avant-Garde created partnerships

with Ilisagvik College and the University of Alaska, Fairbanks (UAF) to overcome this obstacle and support students in experiencing job shadows.

While at the Ilisagvik *STEM Career Camp* and the *Rural Alaska Honors Institute (RAHI)*, students participated in state aligned curriculum, resume writing and interview skill building activities, job shadows, Barrier to Employment training, evaluations, and travel outside their home community.

#### PARTICIPANT WILL TAKE PART IN STATE EDUCATION ALIGNED CURRICULUM

All participants involved have taken part in state education aligned curriculum. During the RAHI program, students attended courses that helped move them closer to an academic degree. Credits earned also helped satisfy certain requirements for high school graduation and were aligned to state standards. Participants at the Ilisagvik Career Camp were introduced to various careers that incorporate the disciplines of science, technology, engineering, and math. During this time, they took part in courses led by professionals in high demand fields. They were also involved in a resume and skill building session offered by Avant-Garde Learning Alliance. The curriculum was aligned to state education curriculum.

#### PARTICIPANTS WILL TAKE PART IN RESUME WRITING AND INTERVIEW SKILLS BUILDING ACTIVITIES

All participants practiced their interview skills with university representatives, other students, and through VTCs with industry leaders. Students also participated in resume and interview skill building activities. Through the lesson plans and activities, students learned about resume writing, developed interview questions, and practiced answering interview questions developed by their peers.

At the Ilisagvik Career Camp, students first participated in a lesson/activity on what resumes are and students discussed why resumes are important. Once completed, they discussed interview skills and worked on developing good interview questions. Then, there were mock interviews, where each student was interviewed by a peer. After the resume and interview skills building activities, students were given time and instructions on how to create an electronic portfolio on Alaska Career Information System (AKCIS). Once all participants had created an e-portfolio, they built resumes. All participants at the Ilisagvik Career Camp created an AKCIS electronic portfolio and their first resume.

#### PARTICIPANTS WILL TAKE PART IN A JOB SHADOW EVENT-

This quarter the Career Explorations Program worked in partnership with Ilisagvik College and UAF to support students in experiencing job shadow events.

During the Career Camp at Ilisagvik College, students participated in activities that simulated what it would be like to have a career in various fields of science. They were busy from 8:30 am until 8:00 pm investigating STEM careers and participating in field trips and seminars. Each day student would spend with an expert in a new field. During this time students would learn what it would be like to have a career in that specific field. They were also given Barrier to Employment Training for each profession discussed. Students participated on a tour of the Barrow Utilities and Electric Co-Op Inc. (BUECI). While at BUECI student were given a tour of the facilities and a rundown of the different job opportunities available. This experience served

as a job shadow and is only one of the many great learning experiences these students participated in.

Many students plan for academic careers after high school, the RAHI program helps prepare these students for their next steps. RAHI is a rigorous academic institute that prepares students for life at college, offering exposure to the emotional and academic experiences that so often cause newly entering college freshman from Alaska rural village's problems. RAHI is a seven week program and participating students sleep in dorms, eat at school cafeterias, attend classes all day, and get a taste for what college life is going to be like. This experience served as a job shadow for students who are serious about an academic career, rather than a workforce career, directly after high school.

**PARTICIPANTS WILL COMPLETE ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION WORKSHEET-**  
Students are continuously assessed. Throughout the program students have been given several types of assessments including, but not limited to, checklists, surveys, observation, and rubrics. Some results have been communicated to Avant-Garde directly through the teachers, while others have been witnessed first-hand working with the students through in person or through VTC. Participants at the Ilisagvik Career Camp completed "Moment to Moment Reflections," a form of evaluation worksheet, and overall the responses to the experience were positive. The results from the RAHI participants were communicated to Avant-Garde through the instructors; again, overall the responses were positive.

**ON-SITE TEACHERS WILL COMPLETE ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION WORKSHEET-**  
Teachers were given assessments and evaluations. They are "very happy with the support from Avant-Garde," and "want to be involved in the program next year." The Career Explorations Program offers students ways to learn about different careers and opportunities in a way that they wouldn't normally be able to. Segue Grant from Qugcuun Memorial High School in Oscarville mentioned that because of the "pre and post lesson plans the students gain a thorough understanding of the presentations." Amy McDonald from Southeast Island School District reported that "students really enjoy the program and feel like they are learning a lot while able to use the information."

**PARTICIPANTS WILL TAKE PART IN BARRIER TO EMPLOYMENT TRAINING-**  
During the extended 4<sup>th</sup> quarter all students participated in at least one Barrier to Employment Training, while most participated in several. At the Ilisagvik Career Camp, the guest instructors who represented universities or academic opportunities spoke about barriers to acceptance, while the other guest instructors who represented professionals in high demand jobs, spoke about the barriers to employment in their field. Participants in the RAHI program learned about barriers of acceptance and actions that could get one expelled from UAF.

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS: SUCCESS STORIES:**

Provide a narrative of participant successes resulting from participation in your program. Please include a separate photo attachment.

Throughout the program we have been supporting students' understanding of the careers that exist and how they can prepare for life after high school. We started the extended 4th quarter building off of information learned in the previous quarters. In the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> quarters, VTCs introduced and taught students how to use specific search tools in AKCIS and how to navigate through the system. As a result of the lesson plans and VTC sessions, 100% of the participants created electronic portfolios. Participants also completed an Occupation Search, Alaska Schools Search, or both, and saved the results to their electronic portfolios. Next, through the "Pathways Project" all participants first, learned about a specific career field through pre-content lesson plans and activities. Then, through a live, interactive VTC from a content provider students learned more about the career option of *their choice* and the "pathway" (or steps to take to get there) to earn future employment within that career. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> quarters we focused on academic programs and institutions that, through attending, will help students take the next steps toward reaching their overall career and/or academic goals. During the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter we also focused on high demand industries in Alaska—including aviation and health.

During the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter we changed the format of the VTC presentations, making them more structured. This structure carried on through the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter. Students knew what was expected of them during the VTCs, as a result student engagement and participation increased. Each speaker presents for five to ten minutes before taking a short break where students huddle in small groups to think of their top questions. Once two minutes have passed, students are given time to ask the presenter their questions. All questions are asked before the speaker responds. The speaker then has about 5 minutes to answer the questions. This process is then repeated for the second topic or speaker. Once the presentations are over, students pair up to discuss what they learned. Then they share out to the group in a short debrief session. During the interactive VTCs students are given the opportunity to build their interview skills by asking questions and listening to responses. Changing the structure of the VTCs has proved to be very successful; students participate more, take more notes, and stay engaged throughout the presentations.

All of the virtual guest speakers spoke about Barriers to Employment. 100% of our participants received Barrier to Employment training on more than one occasion. Higher education institution representatives also spoke about barriers to acceptance and what behavior could get students kicked out of different programs. This was very helpful information for the students to hear. They need to know in advance that alcohol and drug abuse can not only prevent you from getting a job, but it can also prevent you from attending school.

Another success story is that all of our participating teachers continue to use the state education aligned curriculum that we prepare and provide. Our overarching goal is to support teachers and students. By designing lesson plans that are useful to teachers and meet state education curriculum, we have met one of our goals. We have found that some teachers are making modifications to our lessons to make them achievement level appropriate.

The extended 4<sup>th</sup> quarter brought with it many new and exciting successes. Through newly formed partnerships, Avant-Garde was able to support several students in experiencing job shadows, Barrier to Employment Training, resume and skill building activities, and travel outside of their home community.

All of the schools we are working with are located in villages with very few local job shadow opportunities. We are faced with the logistical challenges of organizing job shadow experiences outside of the students' home communities. Organizing something like this requires funding to cover travel expenses, knowledge of the area, along with a chaperone. Through the partnership we created with UAF and Ilisagvik we were able to work out the challenges that were preventing job shadows from becoming an actuality. Because of the program, students were able to experience job shadow opportunities amongst other wonderful things.

**PLANNED ACTIVITIES FOR NEXT REPORTING PERIOD:**

Describe the grant activities you expect to complete during the next quarter.

End of program

**ON TIME AND ON BUDGET:**

Are the grant activities progressing as planned? Are you within your budget? If not, what is the cause? What is the solution? How can we help?

The partnerships Avant-Garde created during this program helped us to meet our goals. Originally we had planned to work with the Alaska Summer Research Institute put on by UAF, unfortunately, this partnership was not actualized for reasons beyond our control. Due to this we are under budget.

We had planned on launching our Moodle site during the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter, but have now assessed that we will no longer be using a Moodle site. Lots of time and work was put into development of the Moodle site, but in the end we found that Constant Contact was a great replacement for Moodle that met our needs. Through Constant Contact we track usage, send live links, and send surveys. It is a more user friendly way to get a lot of the same tasks accomplished. We decided that creating and hosting a Moodle site would take too much time and funding to fully develop.

We recently submitted an extension and budget revision for this grant and it was accepted. The extra time allowed for us to participate in the Ilisagvik Career Camp and the RAHI program. The extra time helped us meet our goals.

**DEMOGRAPHIC DATA:**

List the number of participants, the age groups, the school the activities took place at (list community if not at a school), number of the participants in school, and the number of participants that are not in school and the training dates.

| # OF YOUTH | # OF 16 - 18<br>YEAR OLDS | # OF 19 - 24<br>YEAR OLDS | SCHOOL OR<br>COMMUNITY | # YOUTH IN<br>SCHOOL | # YOUTH<br>OUT OF<br>SCHOOL | TRAINING<br>DATES |
|------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| 15         | 7                         | 1                         | Ilisagvik              | 15                   | 0                           | 7/06 - 7/11       |
| 46         | 43                        | 3                         | RAHI                   | 46                   | 0                           | 5/31 - 7/14       |

**STATISTICAL DATA:**

Please complete the table below as applicable.

|                             | By Quarter   | Career Guides<br>Activities &<br>Exploration | Youth Employ-<br>ability Skills | Work Experiences | Academic<br>Training | Apprenticeship<br>and<br>Pre-<br>Apprenticeship |
|-----------------------------|--------------|----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| 1 <sup>st</sup>             | 07/1 - 09/30 | 24                                           | 24                              | 0                | 24                   | 0                                               |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup>             | 10/1 - 12/31 | 24                                           | 24                              | 0                | 24                   | 0                                               |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup>             | 01/1 - 03/31 | 23                                           | 23                              | 0                | 23                   | 0                                               |
| 4 <sup>th</sup>             | 04/1 - 06/30 | 31                                           | 31                              | 11               | 31                   | 0                                               |
| 4 <sup>th</sup><br>extended | 07/1 - 09/30 | 54                                           | 54                              | 54               | 54                   | 0                                               |

**Please note:** The data collected in your Quarterly Progress Report provides vital information that can have a direct impact on future funding for our grant programs. Forwarding your success stories and photos as part of our requests is further evidence of how rural youth training is crucial to building a strong workforce for Alaska. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.